



Week of Sept. 17 – Sept. 23, 2008

## **Air Force celebrates 61<sup>st</sup> birthday**

It is hard to believe it has been a year since the Air Force celebrated its 60th anniversary with much pomp and circumstance. We shouldn't let the 61st birthday go by, however, without reflecting on six decades-plus of airpower as a separate military service and taking time to look to the future.

With the successes of airpower across two world wars, it is easy to understand the need for an Air Force that was a separate service from the Army.

Our first secretary, Stuart Symington, said shortly after taking office: *"In this day a powerful counterattack is America's only real answer to aggression...there can be no question that we need the world's first Air Force. It is only through the global, flashing mobility of the Air Force that we can hold our counterattack poised...we feel with deep conviction, that the destiny of the United States rests on the continued development of our Air Force."*

Secretary Symington would be proud how our continual development has led to mission success again and again over the years. Some things to think about:

- We stand at a time of great change. To face our enemies and prepare for tomorrow's fights, we have to be focused on high standards and our core values...integrity first, service before self and excellence in all we do.
- We have to study our history and put our lessons learned into every mission. We need to return to the fundamentals of precision and reliability.
- There is no way to know the challenges that lie ahead for our country and our world, but the Air Force has a rich tradition of rising to meet any challenge and is up to the task.

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